United Nations A/71/PV.3

General Assembly

Seventy-first session

Official Records

3rd plenary meeting
Monday, 19 September 2016, 8:30 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 8.40 a.m.

High-level plenary meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants

Agenda items 13 and 117

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/71/L.1)

Note by the Secretariat on programme budget implications (A/71/389)

The President: This meeting is held in accordance with General Assembly decision 70/539, of 22 December 2015, and resolution 70/290, of 30 June 2016.

Before proceeding, I would like to inform members that action on the draft outcome document, contained in document A/71/L.71, will be taken following the statement by the Secretary-General.

Statement by the President

The President: We are witnessing the worst humanitarian and refugee crisis since the Second World War. Millions are fleeing armed conflict and the brutal effects of war. Others are escaping violence, persecution and systematic violations of their human rights. Some are uprooting their lives in response to the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters. Others still are in search of opportunity and a better life for their children.

Over half of the world's refugees are children, most of whom are unable to gain access to education. Women and girls on the move are particularly vulnerable and often suffer the compounding effects of physical insecurity, multiple forms of discrimination and a lack of access to basic services. I have been horrified that so many desperate people in search of refuge, security and opportunity have been met by hostility and hateful rhetoric. Hopefully, the Secretary-General's new campaign to counter xenophobia will help to overcome such negativity.

I urge all people to recognize the positive contribution that migrants make to the countries in which they settle. Today's adoption of the draft New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/71/L.1) will mark an important step forward and reflect our collective commitment to address this global challenge. I urge all Member States to swiftly implement their commitments under the draft Declaration.

This time last year, the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted, ushering in a new transformative framework for our world. Through our collective pledge to leave no one behind, we undertook to ensure that development gains would reach the most vulnerable. In that context, we must ensure that the needs of refugees and migrants are not overlooked.

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16-29162 (E)

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The principle objective of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly is a universal push towards implementing all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals. If implemented effectively, the 2030 Agenda will eliminate extreme poverty, sustain peace, increase local opportunity, combat climate change and address many of the root causes driving people from their homes.

During the seventy-first session, I will take forward the commitment of the membership under the draft New York Declaration to begin a process leading to a global compact on migration and a global compact on refugees. I will also begin to engage with the membership on preparations for a successful intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018.

I urge Member States to maintain their high levels of ambition throughout these processes and to always reach for higher ground on the basis of our common humanity and our values of decency and equality. The well-being of millions rests with us at the United Nations, and we must not fail them in their hour of need.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session and co-Chair of this high-level plenary meeting.

Mr. Lykketoft: As we meet, millions of people across the world are on the move. Far too many are fleeing indiscriminate attacks, conflict and violence, while others are driven by persecution or a lack of opportunity. It is a challenge the scale of which we have never seen. The desperation and suffering of people in flight tugs at our collective conscience and compels us to act compassionately to forge a global response to what is clearly a global challenge.

Regrettably, some countries are disproportionately carrying the weight of this shared responsibility. Despite the generosity of some, we have not at all been able to fill the persistent humanitarian funding gap. We must fill that gap. That is also why we are here today.

The year 2016 has been a transformative one in redefining and focusing international cooperation on one of the most critical challenges of our time. I congratulate the facilitators and all the representatives of the Member States on their efforts during the seventieth session leading to the draft New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/71/L.1), to be adopted shortly.

The draft Declaration reflects the collective commitment of the international community to protecting the human rights of all people regardless of their migration status, strengthening support to countries most affected by the crisis, increasing both the volume of and access to humanitarian assistance, recognizing the positive contribution of migrants and enhancing international cooperation on migration.

I call on the General Assembly to ensure that those important commitments are fulfilled without delay. I also call on all partners — civil society, international financial institutions and the private sector — to support the implementation of commitments and strengthen the coherence of our efforts.

I warmly welcome the Secretary-General's new campaign to counter xenophobia and intolerance. In the face of a changing world, it is vital that we do not give in to fear, but that we strive to maintain our principles and our common humanity. The lives of so many depend on it.

The President: I now give the floor to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Today's summit represents a breakthrough in our collective efforts to address the challenges of human mobility. More people than ever are on the move. Some are fleeing war, while others are seeking opportunity.

Refugees and migrants are not to be seen to be a burden; they offer great potential, if only we unlock it. We must place the human rights of all refugees and migrants at the heart of our commitments. When we translate the draft New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (A/71/L.1), which we will adopt here today, into reality, more children will be able to attend school, more workers will be able to securely seek jobs abroad, instead of being at the mercy of criminal smugglers, and more people will have real choices about whether to move once we end conflict, sustain peace and increase opportunities at home.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development advances those goals. The draft Declaration we will adopt today rallies all partners around collective commitments to protecting the human rights of all refugees and migrants, regardless of their status, increasing support for the hardest-hit countries, assisting despairing people in protracted crises, ensuring that children get an education, improving search-and-rescue

operations and boosting humanitarian funding and the resettlement of refugees.

Also today, we will formally bring the International Organization for Migration (IOM) into the United Nations system, which will further strengthen our collective response. I extend my congratulations to the IOM.

We must change the way we talk about refugees and migrants. And we must talk with them. Our words and dialogue matter. That is why today the United Nations is launching a new campaign called Together — Respect, Safety and Dignity for All. Acting together, we can respond to increasing xenophobia and turn fear into hope. I call on world leaders to join the campaign and to commit together to upholding the rights and dignity of everyone forced by circumstance to flee their homes in search of a better life.

This summit shows that we can find common ground. But the summit will have real meaning only if we all honour the promises made here today. With courageous actions to implement the draft New York Declaration, we will ensure that no refugee or migrant is left behind. I thank the General Assembly for its strong commitment and leadership.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/71/L.1, entitled "New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants". In that connection, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the note (A/71/389) by the Secretariat regarding programme budget implications.

In the light of the time constraints and in order to ensure the expeditious conduct of proceedings, any delegation wishing to make an explanation of position is kindly encouraged to do so in their statement to be delivered in the plenary meeting and/or to submit it for circulation as an official document.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.1. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.1?

Draft resolution A/71/L.1 was adopted (resolution 71/1).

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group.

Mr. Jim Yong Kim (World Bank Group): It is a great honour for me to be here and to address the General Assembly. I would like especially to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership over 10 years and for convening this summit on refugees and migration. His call for international action to address the challenges and opportunities of large movements of people and to uphold the safety and dignity of refugees and migrants worldwide is exactly the right message at exactly the right moment. Today, we are in the midst of multiple crises. In addition to dramatically increasing our financial support for refugees, we at the World Bank Group are approaching our work in four completely new ways.

First, we are responding to the realization that we need much better data and analysis on refugees, migrants and internally displaced people. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, we are improving our data collection to learn what happens when refugees leave their countries, what happens when they return and who among them is more likely to return. Already, our analysis is helping us to refocus our approach. For instance, we know that most refugees do not live in camps but are integrated in urban areas. While there have been many reports about the average time a refugee is uprooted, with estimates as high as 17 to 26 years, our new research has determined that in fact half of today's refugees have been displaced for four years or less, and half for more than four years. That means that development interventions focused early after a crisis could have a great impact on large numbers of refugees.

Secondly, with our partners, we are developing advanced warning systems so that we can anticipate where people will be moving and then respond quickly. In Yemen, we are working with the United Nations Development Programme to finance a public works programme to help people cope and earn money. We are also working with UNICEF to strengthen public-health interventions. For displaced people in Yemen and elsewhere, security is of the utmost importance. But unlike in the past, we are continuing to implement development programmes — even in the context of active conflict — in the belief that if we can increase the resilience of communities, we can prevent even greater displacement, which in turn will reduce trauma.

Thirdly, we are working during crises to help host countries improve the business climate and use the private sector as a driver to stimulate economic growth.

In Jordan and Lebanon, we are bringing to our Board in the coming weeks our first operational projects using concessional finance for middle-income countries. In Jordan, we want to help create special economic zones to generate in excess of 200,000 new jobs for Jordanians and for Syrian refugees. In Lebanon, we are planning an education project to allow 200,000 Syrian children to enrol in Lebanese public schools.

Finally, we are now looking for longer-term solutions in a number of countries — including Afghanistan, Kenya and Somalia — for issues ranging from increasing agricultural productivity in areas hosting refugees, to helping refugees return to their countries. We will continue to strengthen our engagement with the United Nations, other multilateral development banks, the private sector, civil society and many other organizations to meet the needs of millions of displaced people. Much is riding on the outcome of this summit, especially for the people who have fled their homes. We are shaping both their future and our common future.

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Mr. Grandi (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees): Listening to refugees is a sobering experience. Last week, the number of refugees uprooted from South Sudan in less than three years surpassed the 1 million mark. I met some of them three weeks ago. They told me harrowing stories of loss, of family, of home, of homelands and of hope. I have heard similar stories in many other countries I have visited this year. Therefore, this summit could not come at a more urgent time. It is important that we talk about both refugees and migrants. There are many common features that we must join forces in tackling, but refugees have, and must retain, a distinct status, because conflict and persecution mean they cannot go home. With more than 65 million people forcibly displaced globally as refugees, or within their own countries, it is time to recognize that we cannot proceed as we have been.

Today, we have an extraordinary opportunity to shift gears. Addressing forced displacement is a humanitarian challenge that requires global solutions and engaging a full range of instruments and actors in the political, security, humanitarian and development spheres. So far, so good. That has been said before. But what is different now? The difference is that the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1) marks a political commitment of unprecedented force and resonance. It fills what has been a perennial gap in the international protection system, namely, truly sharing responsibility for refugees in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations. For the first time, the comprehensive refugee response framework, which is part of the declaration and which the Assembly is asking the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to initiate and help develop, importantly sets out the blueprint to make that happen.

In emergencies, in protracted crisis and in our search for solutions, we must now trigger the engagement of a much broader range of actors through predictable — another key word — cooperative arrangements, initiated even before a crisis strikes. That can be done. In Uganda, for example, the Government maintains an open-door policy, which I saw myself just a few days ago, and has mobilized a broad range of partners and institutions in an innovative response, centred on education and livelihoods, including for host communities. That is key. Stronger, earlier engagement by development partners and international financial institutions, as just explained by the President of the World Bank, is a fundamental game changer. And there is immense potential in the role of the private sector.

For all of that to work, we look to Member States for political engagement, for funding, for technical support and for concrete actions in support of host countries, which bear the greatest responsibility, and to pursue solutions. The world, shocked by images of people fleeing in huge numbers and dying at sea, does not want our intentions to remain on paper. Practical action and results are needed so that forced displacement can be managed in a principled manner and resolved with courage and vision. I pledge to work with Member States to achieve that.

The President: Before proceeding to the next speaker, we will now begin the ceremony for the signing of the agreement concerning the relationship between the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration, which will take place pursuant to resolution 70/296.

I now invite to the table the Secretary-General and the Director General of the International Organization for Migration.

The Secretary-General and the Director General of the International Organization for Migration signed the agreement.

The President: We have now concluded the ceremony for the signing of the agreement in accordance with resolution 70/290. I congratulate the United Nations family and the International Organization for Migration. This is an important moment as we ensure that the United Nations system is fully integrated to advance a comprehensive and coordinated response for the implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and to address the dire situation of migrant and refugee communities.

I now give the floor to Mr. William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration.

Mr. Swing (International Organization for Migration): The signing of this historic agreement brings the leading global migration agency, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), into the United Nations and culminates a 65-year relationship with the Organization. For the very first time in 71 years, the United Nations now has a migration agency. This is a singular honour for our organization and a genuine success for migrants in particular, but also for Member States and indeed for this summit. On behalf of the IOM's 10,000 colleagues, in some 500 duty stations on all five continents, I wish to thank the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Presidents of the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions, as well as the 165 member States of the IOM and the 193 States Members of the United Nations, who are assembled here today, for that bold and visionary decision.

Three developments have brought us to this landmark moment today: first of all, global migration trends; secondly, fortuitous timing; and, thirdly, trust built on a half-century of cooperation. The first point is that migration has become a megatrend of our century. We live in a world on the move where there have never been so many people in movement. There is unprecedented human mobility: 1 billion of the 7 billion people in the world are migrants, making one in every seven of us a migrant. Were the 244 million international migrants to constitute themselves as a country, they would have a population slightly smaller than that of Indonesia, and slightly larger than that of Brazil. They would have a gross domestic product roughly equal to that of a small- to medium-size European country and far exceed all foreign aid.

The forces driving migration are demography, disasters, the digital revolution, distance-shrinking technology, north-south disparities and environmental degradation. Unfortunately, as a result of those driving forces, a record number of people are uprooted and forced to move: refugees, internally displaced persons, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. Climate change threatens yet a further 75 million who are living just one metre above sea level.

We are also facing a series — which I have not seen in my lifetime — of unprecedented simultaneous, complex and protracted crises and humanitarian emergencies, in an arc of instability that stretches from the western bulge of Africa to the Himalayas. Worse still, there is little prospect, that I see, to resolve any of these crises in the short- to medium-term. Widespread, growing anti-migrant sentiment and policies have led to the cruel irony that those fleeing terrorism and armed conflict are themselves now accused of terrorism and criminality in the public mind of many.

Besides the challenges of disasters, we face the demographic challenge of a global North in demographic deficit and a global South with a turgid rate of job creation facing demographic surplus. Our thesis is that migration is inevitable in this century owing to the drivers I mentioned, necessary if our economies and societies are to flourish and highly desirable if we are to have responsible and humane migration policies. To do that we have to change the current toxic public narrative on migration and learn to manage inexorably growing ethnic, cultural, social and religious diversity.

The second point is that we live with an evolving migratory landscape. The timing for such an agreement today has proved to be fortuitous. Global concerns, especially in Europe, led to a series of major agreements in 2015, a watershed year. Those agreements for the first time gave the United Nations an explicit, official migration mandate, and gave the International Organization for Migration, as a non-United Nations member, a more formal association with Organization in the interest of both institutions. Those agreements are the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Migration also had a prominent place on the agenda of the World Humanitarian Summit.

We are gathered here today at a historic summit, the first ever to assemble Heads of State from around the world to address the question of refugees and

migrants. I am very grateful to the co-facilitators and others who took part in developing the important New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). Timing, therefore, became a critical element in the decision of IOM member States to seek formal association with the United Nations.

Thirdly — my final point — we are actually formalizing an old relationship. Many people long thought that the IOM was already part of the United Nations. We have done everything together. We cooperate with all agencies. And we have built up a level of trust that made the negotiations fairly straightforward. After all, we were born all born together, in 1951, along with our traditional partner the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to bring Europeans ravaged by the Second World War to safe shores and new lives. Since then, we have collaborated so closely that we have continued to think of ourselves as part of the United Nations in many ways. Together with UNHCR, we have brought at least 6 million people — refugees — to safe shores. Trust therefore became a precious commodity throughout our negotiations. We will continue to keep our member States fully and regularly informed. We will continue to insist on being cost-effective with our business model — where 97 per cent of our 10,000 people are overseas and where, out of a budget of $1.5 billion, we will use less than $50 million to run the organization. We will also continue to offer quick delivery, the same sort of openness that allowed us to come to consenus on this agreement.

Let me conclude by saying that these three elements made the agreement possible — global trends, decades-long trust, and fortuitous timing. The positive nature of the agreement underscores that migration is not so much an issue to be resolved or a problem to be solved, but rather it is a human reality that we all have to manage together. To do that, we have to be both responsible and humane. This can be a defining moment for human mobility, beginning with the summit.

Mr. President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Mr. Al Hussein (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights): This should not be a comfortable summit. While the leadership of the Secretary-General, and his fine report (A/70/59), should be acknowledged by all, as well as the admirable efforts by Ireland and Jordan to achieve political consensus, this summit cannot be reduced to speeches and feel-good interviews, with a dash of self-congratulation — and then we move on.

When millions of people see freedom's invitation only through the flapping canvas of a tent; when they carry their children and their possessions on their backs, walking hundreds, perhaps even thousands of miles; when they and their families risk drowning, and are kept cramped in appalling detention centres and, once released, risk abuse by racists and xenophobes — there is no cause for comfort here.

The bitter truth is that this summit was called because we have been largely failing. We have been failing the long-suffering people of Syria, in not ending the war in its infancy. We have been failing others in now-chronic conflict zones, for the same reason. And we have been failing millions of migrants, who deserve far more than lives marked by cradle-to-grave indignity and desperation.

It is shameful that the victims of abominable crimes should be made to suffer further by our failures to give them protection. It is abhorrent that desperate women, men and children can be branded as criminals, and detained for months, even years, incurring further damage to their physical and mental health. We can change this. Here at this summit. Together we can work towards respect, safety and dignity for all. But we cannot achieve this when the defenders of what is good and right are being outflanked in too many countries by race-baiting bigots who seek to gain or retain power by wielding prejudice and deceit, at the expense of those most vulnerable and, ultimately, even those who support them initially.

An epidemic of amnesia is at the heart of this moral collapse in some quarters. Many seem to have forgotten the two world wars. What happens when fear and anger are stoked by half-truths and outright lies? A density of hatred builds up. The pin is pulled. The timer is released, and humankind's rendezvous with the demon of world history beckons again. The bigots and deceivers, in opposing greater responsibility-sharing, promote rupture. Some of them may well be in the Hall this morning. If they are here, we say to them, we will continue to name them publicly. They may soon walk away from the Hall, but not from the broader judgment of "we the people", all the world's people, not from us.

Mr. President: I now give the floor to Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, who will read out a statement on behalf of Mr. Peter Sutherland, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration, pursuant to resolution 70/290.

The Deputy Secretary-General: The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration, Mr. Peter Sutherland, worked very hard to make this summit a reality. Unfortunately, he has taken ill and has not been able to travel to New York. He has asked me to convey the following message to the General Assembly.

> "We are here today to take action together on one of the great issues of the twenty-first century, international migration. It is an issue fraught with peril, but also full of promise. Migrants and refugees are some of the world's bravest people, but aiso among the most vulnerable. Their success or failure is our success or failure. Our ability to protect refugees and to integrate migrants is a barometer of the health of our institutions, starting with the rule of law.
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> "A year ago, United Nations States Members committed themselves to facilitate safe, orderly, regular and responsible migration. If we have foresight and if we implement smart policies, migration will save lives and strengthen our communities. If, instead, we turn against each other and pursue selfish policies, then we will empower the proponents of fear in our societies.
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> "Unfortunately, in crises we have often passed on our responsibility for refugees, not to those best able to give them refuge but to those closest to the crisis. Proximity, however, does not define responsibility. We have failed to unite around principles that should govern us. Tens of thousands of lives have been lost. Let today be the turning point.
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> "I will soon publish a report on how we can manage migration better by working together. I will suggest policies and initiatives that will achieve the following: first, respond to movements caused by crises and protect vulnerable migrants; secondly, give people a chance to migrate in an orderly, safe and regular way; thirdly, reduce the human and financial costs of migration; and, fourthly, stregnthen the capacity the United Nations has to manage this phenomenon. Today we have taken an important step by welcoming and incorporating the International Organization for Migration into the United Nations family. This means an important strengthening of the United Nations work on migration.
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> "By the time we hold an international conference in 2018, I trust that we will have a global compact on migration, and that it is not just ink on paper, but a new set of agreements on how States can work together to manage migration. For that to happen, Member States should start working now. I am already in touch with States and other stakeholders willing to act. I encourage the Assembly to join them. Determined actors can now be pioneers on these crucial issues."

Mr. President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka (UN-Women): It is an honour to address this plenary meeting as the 2016 Chair of the Global Migration Group. The year 2016 marks the Global Migration Group's tenth anniversary, and it is at a crucial time. The Group has grown, both in size and relevance. Two additional members joined this month. I am equally pleased that the International Organization for Migration, one of the founding members of the Group, has just joined the United Nations system as a related organization.

The Group stands ready to support and to be with those who suffer indignity and persecution. The Global Migration Group stands ready to support Member States, civil society and stakeholders within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We do so first, through the implementation of existing commitments, which includes migration-related Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, and those made today in the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1); and, secondly, through processes leading to the adoption of a global compact for safe, regular and orderly migration, and the adoption of a global compact on refugees.

The Group was honoured to help with the preparation for this summit, and to contribute to the concept notes for the six round tables being held today. Furthermore, Group members are working closely with the thematic working groups and task forces to develop tools and guidance on many issues covered in the New

York Declaration. Those include a guidance note on integrating migration and displacement in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; principles and guidelines, supported by practical guidance, on human rights protection for migrants in vulnerable situations within large and/or mixed movements; a handbook for improving the production and use of migration data for development; the International Labour Organization's Principles and Operational Guidelines on Recruitment, and the International Organization for Migration's International Recruitment Integrity System.

Those are critical tools because they will enhance our collective work and help us identify the impact of all these movements on women, children, men and the elderly. Our members, individually and collectively, are committed to supporting Member States and all other contributors in finding solutions that fulfil the aspirations of the New York Declaration. The Group's approach to addressing large movements of refugees is people-centred, human-rights-based and gender-responsive. That includes recognizing the cultural and economic value women and girl migrants and refugees add to societies, and the indignities they suffer. It also involves creating national and international policies that specifically protect and safeguard the often grossly violated rights of women and girls.

The President: In accordance with resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Yury Fedotov, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Mr. Fedotov (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime): The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)stands in solidarity with all gathered here to promote justice and better protect vulnerable women, children and men on the move who are subjected to violence, abuse and exploitation. We cannot allow the biggest migration and refugee crisis since the Second World War to be exploited by criminals as a business opportunity.

In that respect, I welcome the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1), as it recognizes that refugees and migrants in large movements are at risk, and that States need to vigorously combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling, including through proper identification and support, as required by the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air under the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Above all, it is a question of respect. There must be respect for human life and the recognition that every single man, woman and child on the move is a person deserving of, and entitled to, protection. There must be respect for the law and the rule of law: criminal law obliges States to investigate and prosecute crimes and provides rights to victims, including those with irregular status.

To date, 156 countries have made human trafficking a specific criminal offence, as required by the Trafficking Protocol. While implementation of the Protocol remains a challenge, 142 countries have committed to doing the same to stop migrant smuggling. For justice to be done, we need States to respect their own laws. For justice to be truly for all, we need to work together, share responsibility and acknowledge that we can and must do more to stop human suffering. UNODC is here to support members.

The President: In accordance with resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Mats Granryd, Director General of the Global System for Mobile Communications Association, as a representative of the private sector.

Mr. Granryd (Global System for Mobile Communications Association): It is a true privilege to join all gathered here today as we work together to address the urgent issue of the large movement of refugees and migrants at a time when the world looks to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the road map to our future and that of our children.

For those here who are unfamiliar with the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), our association represents nearly 800 mobile operators and approximately 300 companies across the broader mobile ecosystem and adjacent industries. Collectively, our members connect nearly 4.8 billion individuals worldwide. Mobile is no longer viewed as just a technology, but rather as an invaluable asset to deliver life-enhancing services to the underserved, providing solar power to homes, helping farmers improve their livelihoods, creating financial infrastructure through mobile money and many other services that are critical to development.

Among the connected, there are millions of forcibly displaced people, many of whom face abuse and marginalization, but who find in mobile technology a critical lifeline to stay connected to their families, access vital information, navigate their new homes and regain their dignity. That connectivity is so important that we have witnessed refugees who prioritize charging facilities for their mobile phones or Wi-Fi access points above other essential items.

Mobile technology and connectivity are also increasingly at the heart of any humanitarian response, providing vital resources for displaced populations, including mobile-based cash disbursements, digital health services, learning tools in refugee classrooms and beyond. The mobile industry has been particularly active in supporting humanitarian response in times of disasters and crisis. The Humanitarian Connectivity Charter, launched 18 months ago, has already been signed by more than 100 mobile operators in over 75 countries. The Charter is designed to improve preparedness in disasters, reduce loss of life and aid recovery through access to communication and information for those affected by the crisis.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development seeks to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality. If we are to realize that vision by 2030, the current displacement crisis must be our collective priority. The mobile industry, with its unique scale and reach, is committed to continuing and increasing its effort as necessary, but we cannot solve the challenge alone. No one can. An unprecedented situation such as the one we are dealing with calls for a systemic solution, with everyone doing his or her part.

I would like to conclude by calling on everyone — Governments, industry, humanitarian organizations and individuals — to come together to leverage our collective resources in order to build sustainable partnerships that will reduce suffering and preserve the dignity of those affected by crises. Only then will we be on a path to transforming our world and achieving a better future for all.

The President: In accordance with resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Ms. Eni Lestari Andayani Adi, Chairperson of the International Migrants Alliance, who will speak as a member of the migrant community.

Ms. Adi (International Migrants Alliance): I am honoured to stand before the General Assembly to speak on behalf of 244 million migrants from all over the world who cannot be here today.

After years of voicelessness and invisibility, we migrants have finally been welcomed here to speak for ourselves. We are the people who have been denied the future, the rights and the dreams we used to imagine for ourselves. When I was young, I dreamed of obtaning a higher education and making a contribution to my family and society. But worsening crises have affected my family in Indonesia and millions of other poor people. We wake up every day facing a reality of deepening poverty, unemployment, the lack of a chance at an education, eroding social services and the loss of our land. Like many others, I had no choice but to take a job abroad as a migrant domestic worker, so that I could put food on our table, pay off our parents' debt and send my siblings to school.

However, for the majority of people like me, the promise of a better future is a lie. We are trapped into debt bondage, trafficked and tricked into slavery, with our basic rights denied. We are left vulnerable to abuse and many disappear or even die. Our dream has become a nightmare, a nightmare driven by a system that creates profit for those in the migration business and enables companies to push wages down. Our future is bleak. We expect protection and services but are left alone to deal with our suffering. We are alone in a system that does not value migrants' rights and dignity or recognize us as workers or people. We are just cheap labour, commodities. Our vulnerability is exploited and migration policies reinforce our invisibility. We are perceived as security threats, yet we are transformed into an industry generating billions that some Governments talk about as a development opportunity.

In our experience, no matter how much we sacrifice, migration does not guarantee the kind of development that will enable us to go home to a decent life. No matter how hard we work, we are never recognized as workers and human beings with dignity and equality. We wish to be seen and heard, not marginalized and excluded. We deserve respect for our humanity. Migrants are collectively struggling and organizing to make our dreams come true. We have a clear message. Listen to us. Do not talk about us without us. The world wants us to remit, but what we need is for the world to commit — to justice, to development that does not tear our families apart, to a future that relies on the strength of its own people, not the continued export and exploitation of those on our level. The international

conventions on this issue continue to be mere pieces of paper that do not translate into action.

Two years from now, the United Nations is set to adopt a draft global compact on migration. Let us make it real and actionable, frame it as an appropriate foundation and ensure that its implementation will not result in exploitation, displacement, forced migration, conflict or poverty. Let us work for a world without vulnerability, insecurity or invisibility. As people, as workers, as women, as migrants, we are ready to make that happen. Please work with us.

The President: In accordance with resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Mr. Mohammed Badran of Syrian Volunteers in the Netherlands, who will speak as a representative of civil society.

Mr. Badran (Syrian Volunteers in the Netherlands): I speak today on behalf of every young refugee in the world.

In preparing for today's summit, I received many messages from refugees both in Europe and in Syria, desperate to be heard. It would take too long to read them all out, but there is one message that I have to share. It is from Zuhir, a Palestinian Syrian, stateless and stuck like me, with no possibility of escaping the war. He said,

> "We are living on the edge of hell. We have been waiting so long for the day when the world will hear our voice. I hope it is today."

From the time of my arrival in the Netherlands, I saw how even Europe is struggling with the growing number of refugees. There is intense public fear about them. As young refugees, we face that anger and fear every day. Doors are closed to us. Higher education is denied us. We are often dismissed, not taken seriously or underestimated. With crisis after crisis, conference after conference, it seems that inaction is the only thing that the international community can agree on. If today world leaders are unable to find a solution to the refugee and Syrian crises, this summit will be no different from all the other conferences.

We young refugees have dedicated our youthful energies to helping our own communities, our new homes and the ones we have left behind. In the Netherlands, together with my Syrian refugee friends, I have established an organization that in less than two years has expanded to become a network of more than 600 volunteers ready to give back and grow. I am proud to be wearing its T-shirt today. Let us hope that today's summit will be different, and that the international community will share the responsibility for refugees and agree to take action on the following points. They are, first, ending the violence in Syria and protecting its civilians; guaranteeing safe routes for all refugees and no longer putting our lives on hold; empowering refugees to lead projects for refugees so that we can help our peoples; and providing access to higher education for all young refugees so that we can return and rebuild our homes in the future.

My last message to those here is this. In our small way, refugees are already taking action. We want the world's leaders to the same.

The President: In accordance with resolution 70/290, I now give the floor to Ms. Nadia Murad Basee Taha of the organization Yazda, who is also the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking and who will speak as a member of a refugee community.

Ms. Murad (Yazda) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am a survivor of the Yazidi genocide, now a refugee. I was a villager who found herself torn from her life of freedom and dreams to become a slave, without hope, under the rule of the so-called Islamic State. When Da'esh attacked us they killed men and enslaved women. They killed my mother, along with 80 older women, because they did not want to use them for sexual enslavement. They killed six of my brothers and took me, along with 6,500 Yazidi women and children. They committed crimes against thousands of women in slave markets before the eyes of the international community. I wished death upon myself so that I would not see everyone I loved killed or enslaved, or at best, a refugee or a displaced person.

After fleeing, I became an internally displaced person in the Kurdistan region, where 1.5 million refugees live under difficult conditions. I then moved to Germany as an immigrant. Try to imagine, even for a moment, that you are refugees in camps. How would you be able to get food for your family while your tent is drenched with water? How would you be able to provide and education and medical attention for your children while you are unemployed?

Do you know when the happiest day in my life was? It is not today speaking to world leaders. It is when I was working my mother's farm planting vegetables, or

when we would head to the mountain for a picnic. Those indeed were the happiest days. I met many refugees in Greece whose lives, freedom and dignity have been destroyed. One of them said, "There is no life here, and there is no place to return to". We are living a third world war without naming it as such.

Today I want to convey to you a message from all victims around the world. As leaders, you must know that whatever you do will impact either positively or negatively on the lives of simple people. You decide whether it is to be war or peace. You decide to give hope or suffering. You are the ones to decide whether another girl, just like me, in a different part of the world, will be able to lead a simple life, or be forced to live in suffering and bondage. We must put an end to war. We must bring to justice all those perpetrators of crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity. Terrorist organizations, including the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Boko Haram, are the main reason behind the displacement of millions. We must eliminate all those monsters, once and for all.

We should not wait for years to restore peace. We should not close our borders to innocent women and children fleeing from violence. We must stand with persecuted minorities. The world has only one border. It is called humankind. The differences between us are small as compared to our shared humanity. From this rostrum, I beg you all to put humans first and to carry with you the message of Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. I beg you all to put humans first and that each of one of you support peace. If beheadings, sexual enslavement and the rape of children do not prompt you to action, when will you act? You and your families are not the only ones to deserve life. We also deserve a life.

The President: We have heard the last speaker for the opening segment of the high-level plenary meeting. As members are aware, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 70/290, this high-level meeting consists of a plenary meeting, six interactive multi-stakeholder round tables and a closing plenary meeting. The plenary meeting will begin immediately following the conclusion of this opening segment, and will be held simultaneously in the Economic and Social Council Chamber and the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

The meeting rose at 9.45 a.m.